

## Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 210412

42/61

ORIGIN ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PRS-01 L-03 OPR-02

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P R 250027Z OCT 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

S E C R E T STATE 210412

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (1ST LINE PARA 8 OMITTED)

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: IT, CI, PINT

SUBJECT: ITALIAN GOVERNMENT'S INTEREST IN CHILEAN SITUATION

REF: ROME 11445

1. FOLLOWING MAY BE DRAWN UPON IN RESPONDING TO FOREIGN MIN-  
ISTRY SEC GEN GAJA'S REQUEST FOR "HARD INFO" BEARING ON GOI  
DECISION WHETHER TO RECOGNIZE NEW CHILEAN GOVERNMENT.

2. IN ABSENCE PRECISE MEASURES, GAUGING OF POPULAR SUPPORT  
FOR NEW CHILEAN AUTHORITIES IS NECESSARILY SUBJECTIVE. LARGE  
MIDDLE CLASS SECTOR GREETED COUP WITH JUBILATION. WHILE  
ENTHUSIASM VARIES AND IS SUBJECT TO WIDER CHILEAN PUBLIC'S  
EVOLVING PERCEPTIONS, WE HAVE IMPRESSION THAT MAJORITY OF  
ADULT CHILEANS SUPPORTS NEW GOVT'S EFFORTS AT "NATIONAL  
RECONSTRUCTION". IN SEVERELY POLARIZED MARCH 1973 CON-  
GRESSIONAL ELECTIONS, IT WILL BE RECALLED, THE THEN-  
SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 210412

OPPOSITION CANDIDATES OBTAINED SOME 56 PERCENT OF POPULAR  
VOTE. IN DETERIORATING PRE-SEPT 11 SITUATION, MOST CHILEANS  
PROBABLY CONSIDERED SOME FORM OF MILITARY INTERVENTION IN-

EVITABLE AND DESIRABLE.

3. DESPITE SPORADIC SNIPING, AN OCCASIONAL RAID, AND APPREHENSION THAT LEFTIST GROUPS STILL RETAIN SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF WEAPONS, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT MILITARY REMAINS FIRMLY IN CONTROL OF CHILEAN TERRITORY. IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT GOC

RECENTLY LIFTED CURFEW IN CONCEPCION AND ARAUCO PROVINCES, ONE THE ERSTWHILE STRONGHOLD OF THE EXTREME LEFT MIR, THE OTHER THE MOST LEFTIST ELECTORATE IN COUNTRY. IN THOSE PLACES WHERE IT WAS DISRUPTED, DAILY LIFE IN CHILE PROCEEDS TO NORMALIZE.

4. GOC HAS DISPLAYED GROWING SENSITIVITY TO ADVERSE INTERNATIONAL IMAGE ON HUMAN RIGHTS. NEW AUTHORITIES EARLY ACCEPTED MISSIONS FROM UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR) AND INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF RED CROSS (ICRC). LATTER IMMEDIATELY GIVEN FREE ACCESS TO ALL KNOWN DETENTION CENTERS AND AUTHORITY TO CONVERSE WITH DETAINEES ON INDIVIDUAL, CONFIDENTIAL BASIS. CONTRASTED WITH ICRC'S EXPERIENCES IN GREECE AND SOUTH VIET NAM, GOC COOPERATION NOTEWORTHY. GOC HAS PERMITTED ESTABLISHMENT OF REFUGEE SAFEHAVENS UNDER AEGIS OF LOCAL RELIGIOUS GROUPS. APPROXIMATELY 800 REFUGEES THERE NOW. AS OF OCTOBER 18, GOC HAD REPORTEDLY ISSUED MORE THAN 1,600 SAFE-CONDUCTS FOR ASYLEES IN FOREIGN EMBASSIES. IT DECLARED THAT ASYLEES DEEMED GUILTY OF "COMMON CRIMES" WOULD BE EXTRADITED. (FYI. A NUMBER OF SAFE-CONDUCT REQUESTS HAVE YET TO BE ACTED UPON. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER GOC MAY HAVE IN MIND EXTRADITING DIRECTLY FROM FOREIGN EMBASSIES. END FYI.)

5. DETAINEES HELD AT SANTIAGO'S NATIONAL STADIUM HAVE FALLEN FROM REPORTED 7-8,000 RIGHT AFTER COUP TO UNDER 2,000, ACCORDING TO MIN INTERIOR. GOC HAS PUBLICIZED RELEASE OF LARGE NUMBERS OF DETAINEES AFTER INTERROGATION OSTENSIBLY DEMONSTRATED NO GROUNDS FOR PROSECUTION.

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 210412

(FYI. WE HAVE NO RELIABLE ESTIMATES OF TOTAL NUMBER CURRENTLY DETAINED.) MIN INTERIOR ASSURED NATION OCTOBER 23 THAT PERSONS ACCUSED OF CRIMES COMMITTED BEFORE SEPTEMBER 11 WOULD BE TRIED UNDER PROCEDURES THEN IN FORCE; THAT COURTS MARTIAL PROCEDURES AND STATE OF SIEGE EDICTS APPLY ONLY TO ACTS COMMITTED AFTER THAT DATE; AND THAT CIVIL OFFENSES WOULD IN EITHER CASE FALL WITHIN CIVIL JURISDICTION.

6. GOC SPOKESMEN HAVE TAKEN INITIATIVE IN INVITING SKEPTICS AND OTHERS TO "SEE FOR THEMSELVES" THAT HUMAN RIGHTS ARE NOT BEING TRAMPLED. SEVERAL WEST EUROPEAN PARLIMENTARY FACTFINDING DELEGATIONS HAVE

VISITED OR ARE ENROUTE. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HAS ALSO BEEN PUBLICLY INVITED. CHAIRMAN OF INTERAMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IS CURRENTLY PREPARING REPORT OF HIS RECENT ON-THE-SPOT OBSERVATIONS.

7. GOC HAS MAINTAINED FROM FIRST THAT IT INTENDS TO RESPECT ITS INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS IN HUMAN RIGHTS FIELD. IN PARTICULAR, IT HAS PLEDGED NOT TO REPATRIATE REFUGEES INVOLUNTARILY. (FYI. ONLY DOCUMENTED "VIOLATION" OF THIS PROMISE COMES IN REPORT THAT GOC, ACTING IN COLLUSION WITH BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT, DEPORTED SOME 250 BOLIVIAN POLITICAL EXILES TO LA PAZ. THIS REPORT MAY BE INACCURATE. APPARENTLY MANY, IF NOT ALL, DEPORTEES WERE SIMPLY HUMBLE BOLIVIANS IN NEARBY ARICA, WITH IMPROPER OR NONEXISTENT LABOR DOCUMENTS.)

8. GOC HAS SO FAR ACKNOWLEDGED FEWER THAN 600 DEATHS AS RESULT OF FIGHTING SINCE SEPTEMBER 11. ALTHOUGH THIS FIGURE MAY UNDERSTATE CASUALTY LEVEL, EVEN THE MORE SENSATIONALIST AND HOSTILE REPORTING OUT OF SANTIAGO NOW RARELY POSITS DEATHS UPWARDS OF 3,000. IN INITIAL POST-COUP ATMOSPHERE, THESE GUESSES OFTEN EXCEEDED 10,000.

9. GOVT. HAS RELEASED NO RECENT TOTALS ON EXECUTIONS. TALLY DERIVED FROM SANTIAGO PRESS REFLECTS SOME 75 PERSONS EXECUTED, OF WHOM A SMALL NUMBER WERE REPORTEDLY DISPATCHED SUMMARILY WHILE CAUGHT IN TERRORIST ACTS.

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 210412

MAJORITY HAVE BEEN TRIED BY MILITARY TRIBUNALS OPERATING UNDER MILITARY CODE OF JUSTICE CONVOKED AFTER MILITARY PROCLAIMED STATE OF "INTERNAL WAR." JUNTA MAINTAINS THESE ARE NOT INNOCENT CIVILIANS AS SOMETIMES PORTRAYED BUT "ACTIVISTS" CAUGHT IN SOME FORM OR ANOTHER OF ARMED OPPOSITION OR VIOLENCE. ANOTHER 35 DEATHS OF PERSONS ATTEMPTING TO ESCAPE HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN PRESS. NOTING THAT "EMERGENCY" SITUATION HAD PASSED, JUNTA OCTOBER 23 RESCINDED EDICTS CALLING FOR SUMMARY EXECUTION OF RESISTERS.

10. FYI. IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER JUNTA PUBLICLY ACKNOWLEDGES MASSIVE DETENTIONS, SUMMARY EXECUTIONS, UNAUTHORIZED SEARCHES, CENSORSHIP, CLOSED TRIALS AND KINDRED REPRESSIVE MEASURES. IN THEIR VIEW THESE ARE COMPLETELY LEGAL UNDER CHILEAN STATE OF SIEGE LEGISLATION. THEY APPARENTLY SEE NO INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN THESE PRACTICES AND THEIR OWN REPEATED PLEDGES TO OBSERVE HUMAN RIGHTS OBLIGATIONS, EVEN WHEN ALL OF FOREGOING ARE CONDEMNED IN UN DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS WHICH, AMONG OTHER INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS, GOC SAYS IT CONTINUES TO UPHOLD. DISTINCTION MAY BE SEMANTICAL, WITH JUNTA HAVING IN MIND ILLEGAL "EXCESSES" SUCH AS

TORTURE AND ARBITRARY EXECUTIONS WHEN DENYING VIOLATIONS  
OF HUMAN RIGHTS. END FYI.

11. JUNTA AUTHORITIES SEE SELVES VICTIMIZED BY INTER-  
NATIONAL PRESS. EVEN CHILEAN PRIMATE RAUL CARDINAL  
SILVA WAS CONSTRAINED RECENTLY TO SAY, WHEN ASKED ABOUT  
CERTAIN CRITICAL COMMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO POPE PAUL, THAT  
POPE WAS VICTIM OF "DISTORTED" INFORMATION. IT MAY BE  
NOTED IN RESPECT OF CARDINAL'S CREDENTIALS THAT HE HAS  
LONG BEEN NON GRATA TO CHILEAN RIGHT. KISSINGER

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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